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### **PRESS RELEASE**

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# **Sen. Carter announces *Student Health & Fitness Act***

**ATLANTA-** State Senator Joseph Carter (R-Tifton) today introduced the *Student Health and Fitness Act of 2006* during a press conference on the steps of the State Capitol, as many health care professionals, educators, administrators and students looked on. The bill requires formal physical education in Georgia's elementary and middle schools.

"This legislation will ensure that all of Georgia's children are participating in a thorough, adequate physical education program at their schools," stated Sen. Carter. "We need to be absolutely sure that our children are properly informed on how to maintain a nutritious diet, and that they are properly educated in the areas of health and physical fitness as well."

The legislation provides for the establishment of school health advisory councils to serve as advisory bodies to local boards of education on health, physical education and nutrition. The bill also establishes standards for the certification or designation of PE teachers, who would be sufficiently prepared to effectively administer a physical education program. In addition, the legislation provides for an office within the State Board of Education that will be staffed by certified PE personnel, which would be charged with implementing the provisions of the bill and ensuring that each school district has an approved PE program.

The *Student Health and Fitness Act* goes on to prescribe a 150-minute per week minimum of PE instruction per week for K-5 students and plans for 225 minutes per week for grades six through eight, as recommended by the American Heart Association. The Act asks local school boards to develop plans for delivering PE instruction to students in grades 6-8. Ultimately, the legislation authorizes each local board of education to develop the coordinated school health/physical education programs beginning with the 2006-2007 school year.

“It is a great day for our schools and our children,” Sen. Carter added. “By bringing this legislation to the Senate, we will not only ensure the physical fitness of our children, but more importantly we will start them on the path to healthy lifestyle choices that should continue well into adulthood.”

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*Sen. Joseph Carter is the Vice Chairman of the Senate Education and Youth Committee. He represents the 13<sup>th</sup> Senate District which includes Ben Hill, Crisp, Irwin, Lee, Tift, Turner and Worth Counties and a portion of Wilcox County. He can be reached at 404.463.1363 or by email at [joseph@josephcarter.com](mailto:joseph@josephcarter.com) or [joseph.carter@senate.ga.gov](mailto:joseph.carter@senate.ga.gov).*